

Cornish
CENTENARY 2019


THE BOWES
— MUSEUM —

Norman Cornish: The Definitive Collection
16 November 2019 to 23 February 2020
The Bowes Museum

**First major retrospective of the work of Norman Cornish
opened this weekend.**

Schedule of events, talks and workshops announced.



Norman's son John Cornish at the opening of the retrospective.

The Bowes Museum is honoured to be holding the first major retrospective by one of the most loved artists from the North East of England in the 20th Century; ***Norman Cornish: The Definitive Collection***, opening almost 100 years to the day after the artist's birth in Spennymoor.

The exhibition which features more than 70 works including pastels, charcoals and oil paintings from both public and private collections, attracted hundreds of people on its opening weekend.

Norman Cornish's work has an enduring popularity and leaves a wonderful legacy - an immediate and accessible social documentary of a bygone era. Dr Howard Coutts, from The Bowes Museum, said: "We are truly honoured to be holding this first major retrospective of works by Norman Cornish. His chronicles of life in a bygone era are captivating and draw you into the scene that he's portraying."

Norman Cornish chronicled the everyday life of his community, including many street scenes and as such visitors to the exhibition are being invited to take a photograph of their street to be shown alongside Norman's work in the exhibition.

The Cornish family has kindly donated a framed copy of Berrimans Chip Van to be given to the person who takes the best photograph, with runners up getting a family day pass for The Bowes Museum. Entries can be sent to yourstreet@thebowesmuseum.org.uk with a closing date of February 23, 2020.

The Museum is also holding a day of celebration to coincide with Kids in Museums Day on 21 November, when around 150 school children from five schools will enjoy a Music Day where they'll take part in a carousel of events to create sounds, words and visual art in response to the exhibition. This event is supported by Arts Council England.

Junkman musician Donald Knaack will work with the children to recreate the atmosphere depicted in some of the paintings, visual artist Vicky Holbrough will get them up and moving to produce a Doodle Dance and thanks to support from Arts Council England they'll create rap poetry with Tony Gadd before putting on a performance in the Blue Picture Gallery at 3:30.

This is the start of a project funded through TAAP and Northern Heartlands which will see the Museum's Education team outreach working with the schools in Butterknowle, Cockfield, Evenwood, Ramshaw and Woodland in January before visiting the Cornish Sketchbooks on display in Palace Green.

A series of public events have been scheduled to take place over the duration of the exhibition including:

Rewinding the Welfare State: A Social History of the North East on Film

23 November, 2.15-3.45

£5.00

Join us on an interactive cinematic journey through the social development of the North East region from WW2 to today. Dr Ben Lamb from Teesside University will introduce each film and together we'll talk about what makes the social character of our area so distinctive. You'll be invited to share your memories about how accessing healthcare, housing, education and other human rights have changed over the years and reflect on what we can learn from the past to improve our future.

This screening is brought to you by the North East Film Archive, as part of their North East on Film project connecting the people and communities of the region with their film heritage, in partnership with Teesside University. Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Teesside University.



The Quintessential Cornish

26 November, 2.15

Join Norman Cornish' biographers Gillian Wales and Dr Bob McManners for a fascinating talk about his life and work. Their book *The Quintessential Cornish*, the authorised biography was originally published to coincide with Norman's 90th birthday and has been reprinted to celebrate his Centenary Year.



Norman Cornish Gallery Talk

28 November, 2.15

Join Dr. Howard Coutts for a short introduction to the Norman Cornish exhibition.

Behind The Scenes: The Norman Cornish Centenary Lecture

11 January, 2.15

Booking required

Norman Cornish MBE was perhaps the most significant artist to emerge from the North East of England in the 20th Century. Through his work, he recorded one of the most important passages in English history. As part of the regional celebrations of his centenary, his son-in-law Mike Thornton will present this illustrated talk. Revealing predominantly unseen works, it will cover many of the key moments in the artist's career, including important commissions such as The Durham Miners Gala Mural and his works for The Port of Tyne Authority. Mike will also share images of life in Norman's family home of Spennymoor during the 1950s and 60s and works from his trip to Paris in 1967. This is a story of the artist's great determination and resilience to overcome adversity and prejudice to become one of the region's most celebrated artists.

Community art workshops, delivered by artist Vicky Holbrough.

Butterknowle Village Hall

18 January, 10 – 12 and 1 - 3

Free

10-12 Create a portrait, using drawing materials and pastels - participants will create a self-portrait in the style of Norman Cornish.

1 - 3 Make your very own sketchbook, using paper-folding techniques and then use fineliners and marker pens to create Norman Cornish style sketches.

Booking advised email education@thebowesmuseum.org.uk for more details.

Beginners Pastels

18 January, 10 – 12noon

£25.00

Norman Cornish' pastel technique is reminiscent of Toulouse, Lautrec & Degas, invoking the landscape and atmosphere of the mining community where he lived. Join artist Gavin Watson to learn how to create pastel drawings inspired by your surroundings and the current Norman Cornish exhibition.

Developing a Personal Sketchbook

18 January, 1.30 - 4

£35.00

Norman Cornish' sketchbooks are an amazing record of the everyday beauty and stark realities of life in mining communities. This workshop will look at how he used his sketchbook as a filter on his world and how he developed his drawings into larger paintings. Sketching in and around the Museum, in this session you will learn how to develop a personalised sketchbook as a method of collecting and filtering the inspirational world around you.

Tony Gadd Workshop

19 January, 1 - 3

Free but booking required

Join performance poet Tony Gadd for a fun and informal writing workshop inspired by the Norman Cornish exhibition.

Community art workshops, delivered by artist Vicky Holbrough.

Randolph Centre, Evenwood

25 January,

Free

10-12 Create a portrait, using drawing materials and pastels - participants will create a self portrait in the style of Norman Cornish.

1 - 3 Make your very own sketchbook, using paper-folding techniques and then use fineliners and marker pens to create Norman Cornish style sketches.

Booking advised email education@thebowesmuseum.org.uk for more details.

Norman Cornish Gallery Talk

27 January, 2.15

Join Dr. Howard Coutts for a short introduction to the Norman Cornish exhibition.

Norman Cornish night at the Old Well Inn, Barnard Castle

30 January, from 8.30

Free drop in event

Join us for a special open mic night inspired by Norman Cornish. Performance poet Tony Gadd will headline, joined by poets reading their work created at the recent workshop and fantastic local musicians. This will be a popular evening, so be sure to get there early to get a seat.

Free community art workshops, delivered by artist Vicky Holbrough.

Cockfield Community Cafe

1 February

Free

10-12 Create a portrait, using drawing materials and pastels - participants will create a self portrait in the style of Norman Cornish.

1 - 3 Make your very own sketchbook, using paper-folding techniques and then use fineliners and marker pens to create Norman Cornish style sketches.

Booking advised email education@thebowesmuseum.org.uk for more details.

Randolph Centre, Evenwood

Free community art workshops, delivered by artist Vicky Holbrough.

Woodland Village Hall

8 February

Free

10-12 Create a portrait, using drawing materials and pastels - participants will create a self portrait in the style of Norman Cornish.

1 - 3 Make your very own sketchbook, using paper-folding techniques and then use fineliners and marker pens to create Norman Cornish style sketches.

Booking advised email education@thebowesmuseum.org.uk for more details.

Entry to these events is included in the normal admission price of the Museum unless otherwise stated.

If you are still looking for **Christmas presents** a trip to Bowes Museum Shop may provide you with the perfect gift. The shop is currently stocking a range of Norman Cornish's work in prints and copies of the family's book celebrating his work, Behind the Scenes.

Both prints and the book are also available on line at www.normancornish.com

As part of a year-round celebration of the centenary of Norman Cornish's birth, a further exhibition dedicated to Norman Cornish's prolific sketching opened this weekend too.

Durham University's Palace Green Library (The Norman Cornish Sketchbooks, 16th November – 23rd February 2020) For Norman Cornish, sketching was second nature; an inherent part of his everyday life which generated 269 sketchbooks as well as many quick sketches on the backs of chocolate boxes or magazines or whatever came to hand.

This special exhibition of little seen sketchbooks presents a new dimension to the artist's practice, focusing on his observations of life, landscapes and family, revealing the inner artistic processes behind some of his most iconic works.

More information on the artist and the Norman Cornish Centenary events can be found at www.normancornish.com /centenary

The Norman Cornish Centenary Exhibition programme is supported by Arts Council England National Lottery Fund.

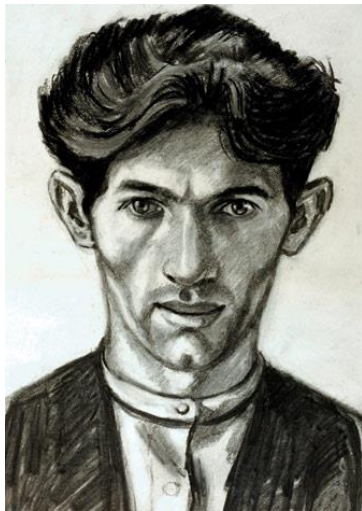
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For further enquiries, opportunities to visit the Centenary celebrations, and interview requests please contact:

[MORE PHOTOS OF THE OPENING](#)

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Norman Cornish, Self-Portrait

Norman Cornish is undoubtedly one of the most celebrated and sought-after British Artists of the 20th century. For over 50 years his images of the miner's working life and his observation of social activities have intrigued an appreciative audience.

Norman was born on the 18th of November 1919 in the small town of Spennymoor. At the age of just 14, Norman left school and began work as a coal miner. From a very young age, Norman had always been passionate about drawing and painting and he soon became aware of the sketching club at the Spennymoor Settlement. Norman was accepted as a member at the age of 15, giving him the opportunity to meet other likeminded artists and ultimately offering him the opportunity to exhibit his work.

During the post war years, Norman's work gained a discerning following nationally and he was subjected to increased pressure by the owners of The Stone Gallery in Newcastle to become a professional artist. The closure of coal mines in SW Durham during this period accelerated Norman's decision to make the step with support from his wife Sarah - a decision which was to become his destiny. In the years that followed, Norman became known as one of the most sought-after contemporary British artists. In 1974 Norman was awarded an Honorary Master of Arts degree from Newcastle University and in 1995 awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Civil Law from the University of Northumbria, to whom he gifted a body of work for their permanent collection just a couple of years later. Norman also had a long-standing connection to the University of Sunderland, which was recognised in 2012 when he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Arts from the University.

Norman continued to paint until his peaceful passing at the age of 94 in August 2014. His work continues to be loved by people of all ages and backgrounds.

<https://normancornish.com/resources/biography>

About #Durham19

For a number of years Durham has seen continued growth and investment in cultural activity through Durham County Council, wider partners and cultural institutions large and small. 2019 sees the compounding effect of this sustained investment in an incredible year of openings, activities, festivals, events and anniversaries, which has been designated as the county's Year of Culture.

With a number of high-profile, multi-million pound developments coming on board to add to the wealth of world-class attractions, festivals and events, #Durham19 will celebrate the county's cultural offer. The campaign, delivered by Visit County Durham in partnership with Durham County Council and cultural partners across the county, will increase visits, promote Durham as a cultural destination, engage residents and encourage local communities to discover Durham's culture and heritage.

Bowes Museum

- The Bowes Museum was created over 100 years ago by an extraordinary couple, John and Joséphine Bowes. Together they built up the greatest private collection of fine and decorative arts in the North of England and constructed a magnificent building to house them in. The collection contains thousands of objects including furniture, paintings, sculpture, ceramics, textiles and many other items covering an extensive range of European styles and periods.
- The Bowes Museum receives a core funding grant from Durham County Council and as a Major Portfolio Museum receives support from Arts Council England. Arts Council England is the national development body for arts and culture across England, working to enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to visual art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2018 and 2022, we will invest £1.45 billion of public money from government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk
- The Bowes Museum is a registered charity. Charity number 1079639.
- The Bowes Museum has undergone major redevelopment, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, One NorthEast through the County Durham Economic Partnership, English Heritage, Northern Rock Foundation, The Monument Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, The Foyle Foundation, The European Regional Development Fund, DCMS/Wolfson Museum and Galleries Improvement Fund, Designation Challenge Fund, The Shears Foundation, **The Richard and Suzanna Tonks Family Fund at County Durham Foundation**, Durham County Council, The Friends of The Bowes Museum, The Headley Trust, Sir James Knott Trust, Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust, Fenwick Ltd, Mercers Charitable Foundation, Welton Foundation.
- The Bowes Museum is a member of the Discover Durham partnership of attractions. Our commitment is to promote Durham as an exciting and vibrant group travel destination and to provide the travel trade with a professional and knowledgeable service: hotline number 03000 26 26 26, www.discoverdurham.co.uk